

HISTORICAL FACT SHEET ON VIETNAM

I. FRENCH INVOLVEMENT:

*1883 - AUG. 25 - TREATY OF HUE. THE FRENCH PROTECTORATE OF SOUTH VIETNAM (FRENCH ENTERED 1858) EXTENDS TO INCLUDE TONKIN (NORTH VIETNAM) AND ANNAM (CENTRAL VIETNAM).

1930-31 - SERIOUS OUTBREAKS AGAINST FRENCH RULE FOLLOW FOUNDING OF INDOCHINA COMMUNIST PARTY IN 1930. AGITATION VIGOROUSLY PUT DOWN.

1941 - JAPAN INVADES FRENCH INDOCHINA

1945 - JAPAN SURRENDERS AND HO CHI MINH DECLARES INDEPENDENT DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.

*1946 - FRENCH FORCES RETURN. RECOGNIZE AUTHORITY OF HO REGIME OVER NORTH. PROMISE PLEBISCITE IN SOUTH. LATER FRENCH ESTABLISH PUPPET GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AND ISSUE ULTIMATUM TO HO TO DISBAND ALL MILITARY FORCES IN NORTH. HE REFUSES. WAR!

1949 - FRENCH ESTABLISH AUTONOMOUS STATE BASES IN SAIGON UNDER EMPEROR BAO DAI.

*1950 - U.S. AND ALLIES RECOGNIZE BAO DAI GOVERNMENT. U.S. BEGINS ECONOMIC AND MILITARY AID. RUSSIA AND CHINA RECOGNIZE HO REGIME.

*1954 - FALL OF DIEN BIEN PHU. FIRST TRIUMPH OF THIRD WORLD NATION OVER AN ESTABLISHED WESTERN POWER.

II. GENEVA CONFERENCE: BEG. OF TRANSITION FROM FRENCH TO U.S. INVOLVEMENT IN INDOCHINA.

*1954 - GENEVA CONFERENCE ON INDOCHINA - SWITZERLAND, CHINA, RUSSIA, FRANCE, BRITAIN, U.S. AND THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM. AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE FRENCH AND THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM:

A. NATIONAL ELECTIONS TO BE HELD IN SOUTH. VIETMINH TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICAL ACTIVITIES IN SOUTH PRIOR TO ELECTIONS.

B. SEVENTEENTH PARALLEL DIVIDED VIETNAM INTO TWO TEMPORARY ZONES, NORTH AND SOUTH, FOR A PERIOD OF TWO YEARS. BOTH ZONES WERE FORBIDDEN TO MAKE MILITARY ALLIANCES WITH OTHER NATIONS OR TO RECEIVE TROOP REINFORCEMENTS AND MILITARY SUPPLIES FROM OUTSIDE.

III. U.S. INVOLVEMENT - DIEM REGIME:

JULY 1954 - DIEM APPOINTED PREMIER OF SOUTHERN ZONE BY BAO DAI REGIME FOR A TWO YEAR PERIOD.

1955 - HANOI ATTEMPT TO BEGIN ELECTION TALKS. DIEM REFUSES.

OCT. 1955 - REPUBLIC PROCLAIMED BY DIEM IN SOUTH WITH HIMSELF

PROCLAIMED AS PRESIDENT.

*1956 - DIEM REPLACED ELECTED VILLAGE COUNCILS WITH HIS OWN SUPPORTERS. LAST FRENCH TROOPS WITHDRAW. U.S. MILITARY GROUPS REMAIN TO TRAIN AND EQUIP SOUTH VIETNAMESE ARMY.

APRIL 2, 1958 - U.S. ISSUES NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCILS PAPER STATING U.S. AIMS IN INDOCHINA "WORK TOWARD THE WEAKENING OF THE COMMUNISTS OF NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM IN ORDER TO BRING ABOUT THE EVENTUAL PEACEFUL REUNIFICATION OF A FREE AND INDEPENDENT VIETNAM UNDER ANTI-COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP."

SEPT. 26, 1959 - VIET MINH SUCCESSFULLY ENGAGED TWO ARVN (SAIGON TROOPS) COMPANIES FOR THE FIRST TIME AND EXPOSED THEIR WEAKNESSES AS A MILITARY ORGANIZATION. ARVN TROOPS NUMBERING 170,000 WERE DIEM'S ONLY SUPPORTERS IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

MAY 1959 - NORTH VIETNAMESE ZONE PASSES A RESOLUTION DECLARING THAT THE STRUGGLE FOR REUNIFICATION WOULD HAVE TO BE CARRIED OUT BY ALL APPROPRIATE MEASURES.

*DEC. 1960 - FOUNDATION OF NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT (NLF) IN SOUTH. FORMER MEMBERS OF VIETMINH LIVING IN SOUTH REFERRED TO BY U.S. AS VIETCONG.

MAY 11, 1961 - KENNEDY ISSUES NATIONAL SECURITY ACTION MEMORANDUM WHICH INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

1. U.S. OBJECTIVE IS TO PREVENT COMMUNIST DOMINATION OF SOUTH VIETNAM.
2. A FURTHER INCREASE IN GVN (GOVT. OF VIETNAM - SOUTHERN ZONE.)
3. THE AMBASSADOR SHOULD BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS FOR A BILATERAL ARRANGEMENT WITH VIETNAM.

*1962 - NLF CALLS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GENEVA ACCORDS SPECIFIC REMOVAL OF ALL U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL. IN ADDITION NLF CALLED FOR A COALITION GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH WITH NEUTRAL FOREIGN POLICY.

IV. U.S. BEGINS WIDE SCALE BOMBING:

*1963 - U.S. LESSENS SUPPORT OF DIEM RESULTING IN MILITARY COUP OVERTHROWING DIEM (NOV. 1) - DIEM ASSASSINATED.

NOV. 1963 - JUNE 1965 - SUCCESSION OF MILITARY LEADERS UNTIL BRIGADEER GENERAL NGUYEN CAO KY ESTABLISHES FIRM REGIME IN SAIGON.

*AUG. 1964 - GULF OF TONKIN INCIDENT. JOHNSON ORDERS RETALIATION BEFORE NAVY HAS DETERMINED WHETHER ATTACKS ON U.S. DESTROYERS DID IN FACT OCCUR. CONGRESSIONAL RESOLUTION AUTHORIZES "ALL NECESSARY MEASURES."

*JAN. - FEB. 1965 - CONTINUED INSTABILITY OF SAIGON GOVERNMENT
U.S. BEGINS WIDESPREAD BOMBING OF NORTH AND NLF AREAS IN

SOUTH. U.S. MARINES LAND IN SOUTH.

V. HANOI PEACE PLAN REJECTED - U.S. INSTITUTES BOMBING PAUSE:

APRIL - MAY 1965 - HANOI PROPOSED 4 POINT PLAN;

1. WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. MILITARY
2. CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES AGAINST NORTH
3. HONOR GENEVA ACCORDS
4. VIETNAMESE TO SOLVE OWN PROBLEMS

JULY - DEC. 1965 - U.S. CARRIERS FIRST AIR STRIKES ON HANOI, HAIPHONG COMPLEX. U.S. FORCES REACH 154,000 (NOV. 4)

FEB. 6, 1966 - JOHNSON, KY, AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE CHIEF OF STATE GENERAL NGUYEN VAN THIEU MEET AT HONOLULU. KY REFUSES TO JOIN IN PROMISES TO NEGOTIATE WITH HANOI OR THE NLF.

JULY 25 - PREMIER KY CALLS FOR ARMED CONFRONTATION WITH COMMUNIST CHINA NOW RATHER THAN LATER. HE URGES ALLIED FORCES TO INVADRE NORTH VIETNAM EVEN AT RISK OF BRINGING CHINA INTO WAR.. KY ADAMENT AGAINST POSSIBILITY OF TALKS WITH NLF.

*DEC. 8 - U.S. TROOPS LEVELS REACH 362,000 IN SOUTH VIETNAM.

VI. TET OFFENSIVE:

FEB. 1967 - JOHNSON (ON FIRST DAY OF TET TRUCE IN LETTER TO HO) HE REFUSES TO STOP BOMBING UNTIL NORTH STOPS ALL INFILTRATION AS SOUTH. BOMBING RESUMED BEFORE REPLY RECEIVED.

SEPT. - VIETNAMESE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS RESULT IN THIEU (PRES.) AND KY (V.PRES.) VICTORY WITH 35% PLURALITY. ALL KNOWN ADVOCATES OF PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OR NEGOTIATIONS WITH NLF BANNED. CIVILLIAN CANDIDATE DZU WHO FINISHED SECOND TO THIEU LATER (1968) SENTENCED BY MILITARY COURT OF FIVE YEARS AT HARD LABOR BECAUSE HE ADVOCATED TALKS WITH NLF AND A PEACEFUL SOLUTION TO THE WAR. HE IS STILL INPRISONED.

*JAN - FEB. 1968 - TET OFFENSIVE. NLF AND NORTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS ATTACK THIRTY-SIX OF SOUTH VIETNAM'S FORTY-FOUR PROVINCIAL CAPITALS, HOLDING MAJOR PORTIONS OF SAIGON, HUE. HEAVY FIGHTING IN HUE. TROOP LEVEL REACHES 500,000.

MARCH 31, 1968 - JOHNSON ANNOUNCES BOMBING HALT.

APRIL - JUNE 1968 - PEACE MOVES IN U.S., ESCALATE AFTER TET OFFENSIVE SHAKES U.S. JOHNSON ANNOUNCES BOMBING HALT NORTH OF 20TH PARALLEL AS FIRST STEP TO "DE-ESCALATE" THE CONFLICT AND "MOVE IMMEDIATELY TO PEACE THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS." TOTAL HALT TO FOLLOW SIGNS OF RESTRAINT FROM OTHER SIDE. HANOI AGREES TO MEET U.S. REPRESENTATIVES IN PARIS, TALKS BEGIN IN MAY. SUBSEQUENT DECLINE IN NORTH VIETNAMESE OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS.

VII. PARIS PEACE TALKS BEGIN:

*OCT. 1968 - JOHNSON ANNOUNCES TOTAL BOMBING HALT. NLF AND SAIGON GOVERNMENTS TO JOIN PEACE TALKS.

*JAN. 1969 - 4-PARTY PEACE TALKS BEGIN IN PARIS - SOUTH VIETNAMESE, NORTH VIETNAMESE, NLF AND U.S.

APRIL - MAY - PEACE TALKS STALEMATE OVER ISSUES OF TROOP WITHDRAWALS AND INTERIM GOVERNMENT. HANOI, NLF DEMAND U.S. COMMITMENT TO TOTAL WITHDRAWAL AND CALL FOR PROVISIONAL COALITION GOVERNMENT REPRESENTING ALL WHO FAVOR PEACE, INDEPENDENCE, AND NEUTRALITY.

SEPTEMBER 31, 1969 - PRES. HO CHI MINH DIES.

DEC. - U.S. CHIEF DELEGATE TO PARIS TALKS (HENRY CABOT LODGE) RESIGNS; NEITHER HE NOR DEPUTY REPLACED. THIEU GOVERNMENT CLOSES TWO SAIGON NEWSPAPERS, SEIZES 15 STUDENT LEADERS PURGES AND IMPRISONS THREE CRITICS IN HOUSE OF REP. VICE PRESIDENT SPIRO AGNEW, ON ASIAN TOUR, DEEMS IT INAPPROPRIATE FOR U.S. TO PRESS THIEU TO BROADEN HIS POPULAR SUPPORT.

APRIL 20 1970 - NIXON PLEDGES TO WITHDRAW AND ADDITIONAL 150,000 TROOPS FROM VIETNAM DURING 1970 BECAUSE PROGRESS IN "VIETNAMIZATION" EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS.

APRIL 30, 1970 - NIXON ANNOUNCES THE INVASION OF CAMBODIA BY U.S. AND SOUTH VIETNAMESE TROOPS.

MAY - MASSIVE U.S. STUDENT STRIKE PROTESTING CAMBODIAN INVASION.

SPRING 1971 - LARGE URBAN DEMONSTRATIONS IN SOUTH VIETNAM. 30 STUDENT DEMONSTRATORS WERE KILLED DURING MAY PERIOD WHILE 50,000 DEMONSTRATE IN WASHINGTON.

JULY 1971 - PRG PROPOSES 7 POINT PEACE PROPOSAL IN PARIS. U.S. SAID THERE WAS NOTHING NEW IN THE PLAN. SAIGON GOVERNMENT CALLS NATIONAL ELECTION. THIEU RUNS UNCONTESTED, WINS RIGGED VOTE.

FEB. 1971 - U.S. INVADES LAOS IN AN ATTEMPT TO SEIZE TERRITORY AND BLOCK HO CHI MINH TRAIL - FORCED TO RETREAT AFTER TWO WEEKS WITH SEVERE CASUALTIES - SCORES OF U.S. HELICOPTERS SHOT DOWN.

OCT. 1971 - GI MUTINIES BECOME VISIBLE IN A MUTINY AT FIRE BASE PACE IN SOUTH VIETNAM - MUTINY MAKES WIDE SPREAD MUTINIES VISIBLE. BRAVO COMPANY OF THE FIRST CAVALRY DIVISION. 72 GIs RESIST ORDERS.

NOV. - DEC. 1971 - MASSIVE OFFENSIVE IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA. PATHET LAO ENCIRCLE SECRET CIA BASE AT LONG CHENG IN NORTHERN

LAOS. SEIZE BOLEVENF PLATEAU IN SOUTHERN LAOS. SOME PROCESS TAKEN PLACE IN CAMBODIA. U.S. BACKED DICTATOR LON NOL'S TROOPS SMASHED DURING OFFENSIVE AGAINST UNITED FRONT TROOPS, IN NORTHERN LAOS. VIRTUALLY ENTIRE COUNTRY-SIDE OUTSIDE THE CAPITAL, PHNOM PENH IN HANDS OF CAMBODIA AND UNITED FRONT BY DEC. U.S. RESPONSE TO LAOS AND CAMBODIA OFFENSIVE IS INTENSIFIED CHRISTMAS BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM. BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM BY JANUARY RESUMED AT PRE-1969 LEVELS. PARTIAL CESSATION OF BOMBING SINCE '68 IS TERMINATED AS FULL SCALES BOMBING RESUMES CHRISTMAS OF 1971. BY BEGINNING OF 1972 200,000 AMERICANS WITHDRAWN.

JAN. 25, 1972 - NIXON SUBMITS 8-POINT PROGRAM TO NORTH VIETNAM DELEGATION. MAIN POINTS INCLUDE TOTAL WITHDRAWAL OF DRV FROM SOUTH VIETNAM AND RELEASE OF ALL POW'S IN RETURN FOR A U.S. BOMBING HALT AND WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS.

JAN. 26, 1972 - 8-POINT PROGRAM DENOUNCED BY NORTH VIETNAMESE DELEGATIONS IN PARIS BECAUSE OF NO POLITICAL SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH, NO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, NO ELECTIONS.

FEB. 1972 - PRES. NIXON VISITS CHINA.

MARCH 24, 1972 - PRES. NIXON CALLS FOR SUSPENSION OF PARIS PEACE TALKS.

VIII. SPRING OFFENSIVE

MARCH 30, 1972 - VIETNAMESE LIBERATION FORCES LAUNCH MAJOR OFFENSIVE.

APRIL 6, 1972 - LIBERATION FORCES ENGAGE IN BATTLE WITH SAIGON ARVN TROOPS AT AN LOC.

APRIL 16, 1972 - U.S. ANNOUNCES AIR FORCE AND NAVY FIGHTER BOMBERS STRIKE NORTH VIETNAMESE PORT OF HAIPHONG AND HANOI.

MAY, 1972 - QUANG TRI FALLS AND IMPERIAL CAPITAL OF HUE THREATENED BY LIBERATION FORCES.

MAY 8, 1972 - PRES. NIXON ANNOUNCES THE MINING OF NORTH VIETNAMESE PORTS AND CONTINUATION OF BOMBING. MASSIVE PROTESTS IN U.S. BY ANTI-WAR MOVEMENT AGAINST MINING AND BOMBING RAIDS.

MAY, 1972 - PRES. NIXON VISITS SOVIET UNION

JUNE, 1972 - AS U.S. WITHDRAWS TROOPS, AIR POWER IS TRIPLED.

JULY 13, 1972 - PARIS PEACE TALKS RESUME.

AUG. 1972 - REPORT OF BOMBING OF DIKES BY JANE FONDA AND RAMSEY CLARKE.

SEPT. 1972 - NORTH VIETNAM RELEASES THREE POWS, THE FIRST SINCE 1969.

OCT. 24, 1972 - PRES. NIXON ORDERS TEMPORARY CESSATION OF ALL BOMBING NORTH OF THE 20TH PARALLEL IN NO. VIETNAM.

OCT. 26, 1972 - RADIO HANOI ANNOUNCES AGREEMENT WITH THE U.S. ON A VIETNAM CEASE-FIRE AND PEACE TREATY.

OCT. 26, 1972 - KISSINGER ANNOUNCES "PEACE IS AT HAND."

NOV. 6, 1972 - RE-ELECTION OF PRES. NIXON.

DEC. 18, 1972 - PRES. NIXON ORDERS HEAVIEST BOMBING RAIDS OVER NORTH VIETNAM. PARIS PEACE TALKS BREAK DOWN.

JAN. 2, 1973 - PARIS PEACE TALKS RESUME.

JAN. 15, 1973 - NIXON HALTS ALL AIR AND NAVAL ATTACKS AGAINST NORTH VIETNAM.

JAN. 23, 1973 - U.S. AND VIETNAMESE AGREE ON CEASE-FIRE IN PARIS. MAIN POINTS INCLUDE: IN PLACE CEASE-FIRE, WITHDRAWAL OF U.S. TROOPS AND RELEASE OF POWS WITHIN 60 DAYS OF SIGNING, DISMANTLING OF MINES IN NO. VIETNAMESE PORTS AND OF U.S. BASES IN SO. VIETNAM, RECOGNITION OF VIETNAM AS ONE COUNTRY, RECOGNITION OF THE PRG, ESTABLISHMENT OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF NATIONAL RECONCILIATION AND CONCORD MADE UP OF 3 EQUAL SEGMENTS (PRO-SAIGON, NEUTRALISTS, AND PRG) WHICH WILL SET UP ELECTIONS IN THE SOUTH AND PREPARE FOR REUNIFICATION OF NORTH AND SOUTH VIETNAM, FOUR PARTY (INDONESIA, POLAND, HUNGARY, AND CANADA) COMMISSION OF CONTROL AND SUPERVISION SET UP TO SUPERVISE THE CEASE-FIRE AND EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS. AGREEMENT DOES NOT INCLUDE CEASE-FIRE IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA.

FEB. 21, 1973 - PEACE AGREEMENT IN LAOS CALLING FOR END OF U.S. BOMBING, WITHDRAWAL OF ALL FOREIGN TROOPS AND RELEASE OF U.S. POWS WITHIN 60 DAYS OF THE SIGNING, SET UP NEW NATIONAL UNION GOVERNMENT THROUGH FREE ELECTIONS, GOVERNMENT OF SOUVANNA PHOUMA TO BE REPLACED WITHIN 30 DAYS BY PROVISIONAL COALITION GOVERNMENT (PATRIOTIC FORCES OF THE PATHET LAO, NEUTRALISTS, AND U.S. CONTROLLED VIENTIANE GOVERNMENT).

SOURCES USED AND SUGGESTED READINGS

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